leviathan

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by littleleaflings

Summary

Roxy faces off against Freddy and Gregory at Roxy Raceway. Freddy is forced to act against his wishes.

Notes

another one from the not-writer-extraordinaire. sorry in advance to roxy i did you more dirty than i did monty and monty was already bad.

See the end of the work for more notes

—

While the elevator leading down to the atrium heads to the bottom, Freddy rubs circles in Gregory's back.

What an ordeal.

When Gregory went alone to handle Monty, as the logistics of where he was were not Freddy friendly, he had sat back and watched it all happen on the cameras.

There hadn’t been a deep, dark sense of satisfaction when Gregory had tugged off his claws and stashed them in his duffel, the gator now in even worse condition than Freddy had left him earlier. In fact, he wishes there had been. Instead, there was only a deep sadness, grief potent, tearing him apart inside. Monty is now broken in half, his legs twisted and disconnected from his torso, split open with his jaw flapping open. One of his eyes is dislodged, his glasses split down the middle, much like the animatronic they belonged to.

A part of him is numb about the situation, as it becomes worse and

worse. It is the exact opposite of what he had experienced when he had first seen Chica, crushed and destroyed. She has the best intentions, he is sure of it, and witnessing her stumbling with a missing voice box unsettled him. Now, it seems all he is capable of is attempting to emotionally distance himself from everything, only functioning to fulfill his set objective: getting Gregory *out* of this *wretched* place.

Another is deeply upset, yes, but *understands it,* in a way that he might not have earlier in the night. Monty had kept attacking Gregory, too angry to control his impulses... if the boy hadn't been willing to do it, Freddy certainly would have had to in his stead, with Monty's clear violent intent. Chica had kept stalking him, constantly trying to tempt him to come out of hiding, and even if she just wanted him to go to Vanessa, she had refused to listen to his concerns.

He recalls the fight with Monty, and the argument with Chica. How nasty has he been? And yet, how come he seems to be the only one capable of having any sense whatsoever? Why have his bandmates, who are entertainers, become *predators?*

Why is he the only one unaffected? And why is he so willing to risk *everything* for this boy?

He simply chalks it up to his newfound and extremely protective programming, and lets it go. His perspective has changed. He can't afford to question morality anymore. The more destroyed the other animatronics— *friends,* his program supplies, his *friends*—become, the less dangerous they are to Gregory.

It is an unfortunate truth, and one he had stopped shying away from hours ago.

It doesn't make it any easier.

There was not much time left before 6 AM, at the very least. Soon, this nightmare would be over.

Freddy doesn't feel any closer to figuring out any answers to their questions, but he is exhausted from the constant strain. He can only imagine how Gregory feels, as a human child, being pushed to such extremes. He longs for the morning, where he will not have to fear for Gregory's safety, and the boy can be free.

Selfishly, he also longs for the world to start making sense again. Some kind of reboot, just so Gregory can experience the joy that the mall is meant to give to people of all ages.

He wants that more than anything. But that isn't what's happening right now, and he knows that, just as much as he knows the boy is owed so much more.

"Now that we've fixed you, and gotten past Monty," Gregory holds up the Faz Camera, finger trained over the trigger, "we're gonna go to the raceway and see what we can do there."

Freddy flexes his new claws. They feel strange, attached to the rest of him, just as the voice box is; a ball and chain, stuck in his throat. "Of course. May I ask what we are looking for?"

A way to stop Roxy is the answer, of course, and Freddy is fully aware, but he wants to hear it be anything else.

"Maybe there's a way out, or something." Gregory's excuse is weak, and Freddy can't convince himself to believe it, but he must act the part.

“Perhaps. I am sure I would know of it, but…” He remembers the closet, with all of the endoskeletons, and shudders. He hadn’t been allowed in there for a reason, and he has been pushing away unwanted thoughts and feelings ever since then. “There very well could be, despite that."

The elevator groans as it hits the bottom of its shaft. The doors open, and Gregory tenses, clutching his duffle as he rifles through it for his flashlight.

“Let’s just keep moving.” Freddy nods, preparing to follow after the boy, ears flicking as he keeps an eye on the camera feeds. The atrium is remarkably empty, from what he can tell—

—and then he spots Chica, trembling behind a table.

The light from Gregory’s flashlight catches on her crushed face and limbs, her violet eyes rolling as she cowers. Her hands clutch her head, neck twisting as she glances over the edge of the table.

Is she… afraid of them?

No. Her eyes narrow when she spots the boy, arm perching at her side, knees pushing her up—

—and she practically falls down when Freddy’s eyes join Gregory’s light, his heavy steps rattling the cutlery on the table above her. She clutches her legs close to her chest, head lowering, eyes flicking back, not wanting to reveal her position.

It hits him, suddenly.

She's not afraid of Gregory.

She's afraid of *him.*

Monty, Freddy's systems claim, *she must have seen Monty after your fight, and knows about your involvement in all of this.*

She stays in place as they pass, her shaking worsening the closer Freddy gets.

It *hurts.*

Not once, not *ever,* has Freddy scared his fellow animatronics, nor a child in his care. He may have intimidated them, once or twice, but they all knew it came from a paternal sternness, something he shouldn't be capable of as a metal creature in a plastic suit. And yet he is, just as he seems to be capable of making them frightened of him, so much so Chica is unwilling to approach.

Monty must have felt the same way. If he didn't, he, at the very least, must be even more furious than he usually is.

He wonders if Roxy is also afraid. She is not as badly tempered as Monty is, but the two get along for a reason. While Monty tends to be a little too calloused, too uncaring of his own strength, Roxy loves to show off, doing everything in her power to seem as cool as possible.

He doubts it. Roxy may believe herself to be the last line of defense, and it may be getting to her head as a result.

She is. Against *him.* Just as he has been Gregory's *only line of defense* this *whole time.*

“Freddy! Come on!” Gregory’s voice snaps him out of it, the boy climbing the escalator. *Right.*

“I am sorry.” He lumbers after him, casting his gaze back, watching Chica skirt from underneath one table to the next, farther away.

His motors whirr.

When he reaches the area underneath the Sodaroni screen, Gregory is already shoving his security pass on the sensor, the doors jolting up.

“You seem distracted,” the boy says, Freddy’s fingers twitching at his sides. “Are you okay?”

“Do not worry about me, Gregory.” Freddy smiles, ruffling the boy’s hair. He yelps and shoves his hand off, Freddy chuckling as he puffs his cheeks.

“Well, fine.” Gregory huffs, walking down the enclosure. “I’ll never ask how you’re doing ever again.”

“Please, do not say that,” Freddy replies, opening the next door before the boy can tug out his security pass again. “I am not built for

understanding sarcasm well."

"That was sarcastic to you?" Freddy's ears droop, and Gregory winces. "Okay, okay, fine! Yes, it was sarcastic!" When Freddy grins, slightly devious, the boy groans in reply.

"You're like a big puppy." He mumbles as Freddy picks him up to get on top of a platform. "I don't get how you can look like that."

"And I do not understand how you can resemble a young bear cub so much," Freddy remarks, stepping after him. "Yet, we both must wonder. Some things cannot be explained so easily."

"Bear cub?" Gregory looks up at him in astonishment. "Really?"

"Well, yes." Freddy tilts his head, concerned. "Do you not… like me calling you that?"

"No, no, it's fine!" The boy flusters, ears reddening, hands waving wildly. He averts his gaze, coughing into his fist. "I-I just… didn't expect it, that's all."

Freddy hums, his previous grin returning. "Do you have a dog at home?"

Gregory puffs a small breath, blowing his hair out of his face. "No. It was just the first thing I could think of."

"A cat, then?" Freddy notices Gregory's steps quickening, and follows

suit, down the next hallway. “I believe cats are quite cute, as well, from what I understand.”

“No, I don’t have a pet.” The boy scoffs, frowning deeply. “Can you stop asking me about stuff like that?”

“About what?” Freddy raises his hands to help Gregory down from the wooden planks to the floor below, but the boy slips out of reach.

“Just—forget it.” Gregory waits for the bear to follow him, his movements clunky as he lands on the ground with a harsh thump. There’s a gate not far from where they are, one only Freddy can open. “Let’s go."

After a few more feet of complicated and disarrayed construction, Gregory points to the light of the flashlight clutched in the hand of a S.T.A.F.F. bot. Just as he does so, his own goes out, the two dumped into relative darkness.

Clicking the button on his flashlight furiously, Gregory hisses. "The battery's dead!" All it gives him is a dim flicker, not the beam he needs to get around. "Do you see a recharge port anywhere?"

"No, Gregory. This tunnel likely does not have any, at least until we get past these temporary walls." Freddy turns his hand up, fingers splaying out. Although these are Monty's claws, he recalls that the blueprints for their fingers are similar enough to where he can get away with what he needs to do. "Do not worry—I have a lighter in my endoskeleton, and we can use it until we find one."

"What?" Gregory twists his head up, brows furrowing. "Why would you need one of those?"

"Birthday candles, mostly." Freddy double-checks to see if the latch is still on Monty's finger—yes, it is, and although it seems to be intended for replacing the sharper claws, it will do—and flicks it open, fire sparking at the tip. "Once, a parent of a guest needed their cigarette lighted. It was… frowned upon, but I had not been programmed to be incapable of doing it, so…"

Gregory laughs at that. Subdued, perhaps, but heartfelt nonetheless. "Of course you'd do that. Is being able to say 'no' also in your programming?"

"You tease me too much," Freddy laughs along with him, pulling his hand up to light the way. The flame is far more fickle than the flashlight, but with his eyes and hand combined, it's bright enough for them to make their way around the construction site. "Now, let us be on our way, as you have said before."

They lumber down the rest of the hall, Freddy breaking open a gate or two in the process. Security bots manage to roll over discarded trash and flyers, but they make their way through, despite it all. When they reach the room containing the racetrack, Roxy's voice rings out from the intercom.

Gregory flinches at the noise, then stomps his foot. "I hate it when they do that!"

"I apologize." Freddy quickly cycles through each camera in the vicinity, not spotting anything out of place. Wherever Roxy is, if she's in this room, she's hiding outside of view. A brief worry crosses his circuits—is she aware that Gregory is in his care, and is being more careful as a result?—but he swipes it away from his vision.

He can't afford to worry about possibilities. They have come to the raceway for a reason.

"I am afraid that all the intercoms are automated, and there are motion sensors at every major entrance."

"Does that mean the others can hear where we are?"

"It is not impossible." Freddy takes a look over the glass panels serving as guardrails. The race track twists in the center of the room, stopping points for the carts glowing yellow below them. Roxy, dressed in a racing suit and carrying two flags, is printed on the wall, looming above them. He snaps his head to the silver glinting in the corner, only relaxing when he sees it's just her statue, head held high and proud, watching over the entire course. There's enough ambient light for Freddy to feel comfortable turning his lighter off.

He likes to think, if they were not in the situation they were in now, that this would be Gregory's favorite place in the whole mall. He seems like the type to enjoy adrenaline rushes, of high speed chases, outside of having to do so to prevent his death. Freddy enjoys spending time here, too, whenever he is called, but it is rather infrequent, and the entire raceway has been out of order since the company lost a lawsuit. A child had gotten injured, and Fazbear Entertainment has since put the place on lockdown to meet safety guidelines. Roxy has been out of sorts ever since; he believes it's impacting her more than she lets on, and has made her self-esteem take a nosedive. "If we hurry while we explore, it is less likely that they will be alerted."

"But how do we move quickly with all of this construction?" Gregory adjusts the duffle bag on his shoulder, edging towards the right stairwell on the edge of the balcony. There are forklifts all over the place, security bots jostling cardboard boxes and equipment. "It's really messy here, and I don't know where to start."

“We can walk from end to end. If something catches our eye, we can go there.” Freddy’s ears twitch as he opens his hatch. “You ought to get inside. It is much safer that way.”

“Freddy, you’re too slow.” Gregory waves him off, climbing down the steps. He seems focused on the Information building at the other side of the wall, boxes strewn about it. Roxy, holding her keytar, stands atop it. “You can’t run when I’m in there. It’ll take too long, and I don’t wanna risk it. Come on!”

Freddy’s fans spin as he tuts, shutting his hatch. He dislikes the idea, but he can’t argue with the boy’s logic. He’s right; he is rather slow, with the added weight, and he wasn’t built with speed in mind in the first place. “Alright. I am behind you.”

He sticks close to him as Gregory pries open the door, staying at the doorway. There doesn’t seem to be any S.T.A.F.F. bots, and the boy rifles through the papers on the nearest counter, flashlight charging at the port behind him.

Freddy keeps his gaze trained on the rest of the room. It’s more of a cavern, really. He notices a race car, outside of the pit stop, where it’s supposed to be. It’s colored like him, a driver assist bot attached to it.

It’s missing its head.

Freddy grimaces, Gregory padding up next to him with a notebook in his hand.

“I found something—and I wanna ride in a kart.”

“What?” Freddy blinks, putting a finger to his chin. “Why would you want to do that? Right *now?* ”

“No, no.” Gregory swallows, rubbing the back of his ankle with his other foot. “For later. Just in case.”

Freddy doesn’t like the sound of that. He humors Gregory, anyways, despite the fact he recognizes what Gregory’s playing at.

“I am so sorry.” He gestures, vaguely, hand hovering over Gregory’s head. “It appears you are not tall enough to ride the karts alone. You will need a working driver’s assist bot in order to do so.”

“What do you mean, working?”

“I see a kart that has one, but,” Freddy points to it, Gregory squinting as he follows his finger. The boy deflates the moment he notices its peculiarity.

“Oh, man, it’s missing its head!”

“Quite gruesome.”

Gregory rolls his eyes. “What do I do?”

“There should be one around here somewhere,” Freddy clicks through the camera feed, unable to see much evidence of one on first viewing.

“Perhaps there is another cart that has a functional bot?”

“Nah, the notebook I found says there’s only one.” The boy waves it in the air, before shoving it in his duffel. “Should go look there to see, though.”

“Agreed.” Freddy pauses, Gregory opening the door, ready to scamper off. “Are you sure you do not want to—”

“Yes.” Gregory scowls, glaring up at him. “Do you think I can’t do this part alone?”

“Of course I believe you are capable.” Freddy tangles his claws together, eyes downcast. “It is—just a precaution.”

Softening, the boy puts a hand on Freddy’s arm. The bear keeps his gaze to his hands.

“You don’t want me to get endangered again?”

“Of course I do not want that.” Freddy shakes his head, unable to overcome the reminder that he carries parts of his friends with him. “I did not want any of this to happen.”

“Freddy, you’re protecting me. Right?”

“Yes.” The bear tears his eyes away from the green and purple plastic. “I am. Why are you asking these questions?"

“I don’t need protection all the time.” Gregory licks his lips, words hanging on his tongue, before he continues. “I’m used to… being on my own. I don’t get along with many people.”

“That still does not mean—”

“Freddy, please, *listen.”* Gregory leans his head against Freddy’s chest, the animatronic shutting his mouth. “I’m not helpless. I know you’re not trying to imply that, and I know I’m still a kid, but…”

“…but?”

“But,” Gregory looks up at him, fingers finding Freddy’s hands, and squeezing. “Every time I’m with you, I endanger you, too.”

Freddy’s face falls. He untangles his fingers, opting instead to hold the boy’s hand. It’s warm, and soft, and so, so *small.*

“It is a risk I am willing to take. I have done so this long. This is no different.”

“Yeah, and you’ve gotten *hurt* because of it.” Gregory stands up on his toes to cup Freddy’s cheek, glad the bear is leaning down so much. “Remember when Monty hit you with the club?”

“Of course I do.”

“Your jaw was all messed up. Your eyes, too. And you kept limping, all the way back to the stage in the atrium. I don’t—” The boy clears his throat, clearly upset by the memory. “I don’t *want* to take that risk. I don't *want* us to have to, if we can avoid it. I don’t *want* you to get damaged even more.”

Freddy’s fans spin as he leans into Gregory’s gentle touch, nodding. “I understand." A pregnant pause. "Do you... want me to stay here?”

“For right now.” Gregory pulls away, and the loss shreds Freddy’s whole being. “I’ll call you when I need you, okay? Try to find a station. It’s been awhile since you charged, and even with all those battery upgrades, bears need their sleep, too.”

“I know.” Freddy nuzzles his muzzle against Gregory’s forehead, the boy laughing at the gesture. “I will stay safe. You must do the same.”

“I get it, *dad,”* Gregory gripes, but it’s all bark, no bite. Freddy smiles, his body warming at the words. “I’ll call you if I need anything. See you soon.”

He watches Gregory leave, the sensation familiar. He always hates seeing him go, especially into the dark. Left alone with only his systems for company, it seems, and his feet as he moves to the nearest recharge station.

His thoughts first turn to how Gregory had called him ‘dad,’ and how delighted it makes him.

He has never been called that before. No child would ever mistake him for their parent, especially as a 10 foot animatronic bear. Although Gregory may have said it in jest, it still heats his circuits with joy, to be seen as such a thing.

He has always been told he is rather fatherly. He has simply never had anyone make that leap before. A boy like Gregory has gone through so much, in so little time, and Freddy cannot help his sense of responsibility towards him. But to have it acknowledged, and then be reciprocated by letting Freddy care of him? Especially with how stubborn Gregory is? He could not think of a greater honor.

He's starting to wonder how he'll function *without* the boy around. Would he be lonely, yet again, like before, having to stand and wave as each child who slips into his life comes and goes? Would he have to settle for an existence that once had satisfied him, but in retrospect, seems meaningless? And what of Gregory, when he has to return to the life he's *supposed* to live?

His thoughts shift down a darker train of thought.

Where is Roxy?

She has seemingly disappeared. As Freddy opens up the feed to the cameras, he can't help but keep a watchful eye on every nook and cranny, Gregory's bobbing flashlight a beacon in the depths of the attraction.

He scrapes the area towards the farthest wall first, evading patrol bots with an ease that should not come naturally to him. Occasionally, he clicks off his flashlight, making sure not to attract attention. As he tracks his way around in a circle, Freddy becomes more and more anxious. Each time Gregory slips into a stroller, or behind a forklift, his chest heaves with his desire to bolt to his location.

The boy can do this by himself, Freddy's motors whirr, *and he does not want your involvement. Respect his wishes.*

He all but forces himself into the recharge station. He's in the main hallway now, Roxy's Salon bright against the darkness of the mesa inspired landscape.

Once inside, he checks the cameras again. His shoulders sag in relief when Gregory makes it to the other side of the room unharmed. He steps into an alcove next to a staff only door. There's a crate leaning against the wall, long and wooden. On it is a sign, clear in its intent: Driver Assist, with a bot carrying two flags.

The relief is gone the moment Gregory opens the crate, a bot inside lurching upwards. The boy gasps, loud and clear, stumbling back as the bot falls forward, head tumbling off its neck and hitting the ground.

"Gregory!" Freddy's voice rings from his Faz Watch. "Are you alright?"

"I-it just startled me, that's all." Gregory shakily stands, picking up the head. "Now what?"

"...I do not believe it will work in that condition." Freddy checks on his battery power: around 94 percent. "However, there is a S.T.A.F.F. repair station in the West Arcade. You will need a Dance Pass to access it."

"Where do I find one of those?"

"Have you checked the party garages?" Gregory shoves the head in his duffle, hugging the wall to avoid the security bot lurking around the corner. "The raceway was closed very abruptly prior to the new

construction. Guests tend to leave things behind during emergency situations."

His system alerts him to a movement, right across from where Gregory is walking. When he checks it, there is nothing.

Odd.

Dangerous?

"Okay." Gregory turns on his heel and the door to the closest garage opens, revealing the karts parked in a row. "And once I find it, we go to the Fazcade, right?"

"That is correct." Freddy checks the camera again, just to be sure. There's something in the corner, but it's gone before he can fully process it. "Gregory, I am set to be fully charged in just a few moments. Would it be alright for me to come to you?"

"Just a second," Gregory enters the other garage, and grins, rushing towards the Chica standee at the back of the room. In a box is a bunch of Dance Passes to be handed out, and he grabs one. "Got it! I'll come to you."

"Understood." Freddy fidgets, another camera alerting him to movement. It's closer to the stairs, and yet, when he checks, there is nothing but equipment and the security bot.

It can't be a malfunction. Not when it's *traveling.*

“Come, *quickly.”* Freddy’s body jolts as the cords in his back unlatch, his battery fully charged. The door slides open and he steps out, sending his location to the boy. “There is something alerting the cameras.”

“Okay, okay.” Gregory shoves the paper in his pocket, flashlight clicking on. “Do I have to go down the maintenance hall?”

“Yes, come back the way you came.” Freddy’s ear flicks as he walks up to another Roxy statue. He gazes up at her, turning off his comms system, just for a moment, to collect himself.

Please, Roxanne, Freddy pleads, shutting his eyes. *Please, if that’s you, take your time.*

For a long three minutes, there is silence. He shifts through the cameras, even flicking to ones outside of the raceway. Chica has long since abandoned the atrium, and he hasn't seen Monty since he fell. He’s met with consistent alerts, but the wolf is quick, the quickest of the four of them.

His worry wars with his restraint. He knows Gregory will be mad at him for not trusting his judgement, but Roxy is trying a different method, carrying on in the dark with the boy unawares.

If that is her. It could still be a glitch, just a badly timed one, and he isn’t absolutely sure. Not with how his systems have been acting.

He wants to believe Roxy is better than the others. He wants to so desperately.

But it isn't true. He recognizes that.

Finally, *thankfully,* he gets the alert he needs to act.

Gregory is finally at the doorway between he and Freddy when Roxy launches herself from a ledge above, teeth bared.

“There you are!” She snarls, Gregory gasping as her legs slam into the ground. The door opens behind him as he darts underneath it, the wolf crouching to do the same.

Freddy’s hatch opens wide as he faces them, aware of the position he’s putting himself in. He doesn’t care, not when Gregory is in her line of sight, not when he trips on the ground. The boy fumbles with his bag, fingers clawing for the camera, before his face falls, realizing he only has the camera and not much else.

The bear dashes to him, his vision clouded with alerts, grabbing the boy by his legs. Gregory scrabbles inside, gulping in panicked breaths.

“I *knew* it!” Roxy bellows. This all could have been prevented if Freddy had stayed *close.* “Freddy, *don’t you dare!”*

He has only a moment, a *second,* before the hatch closes and locks.

Roxy's hand wraps around the hunk of metal, and *pulls.*

It fights against her grip as she leers into the hatch, and yet, she persists, tugging it open enough to get to the boy inside.

Gregory shrinks in place, eyes wide, as she snaps forward, clutching the boy's arm. He screams as her claws scratch deep into his skin.

Freddy's sensors overload.

His body moves before he permits it to.

He witnesses his fist slam up against Roxy's jaw from underneath. He sees the red light flowing over her face from his eyes, face pieces clacking together, snout rattling from the impact. It feels as though he is watching from a different perspective, from outside of his own metal coils and plastic casing.

She crumples to the floor, jumping back. Her hand cups her cheek, her snout now indented on one side, a few teeth littering the ground.

His hatch shuts. Freddy's motors hiss smoke as the red light flickers.

He *can't* lose control, not again. His interior runs a diagnostics check on Gregory as he takes a step back, then another, then another. *His fault, his fault, this was his fault.*

He can’t allow this to end like his confrontation with Monty did.

The boy is injured: three long gashes, on his left forearm.

He has to ensure Gregory's health and safety. Roxy can wait, at least for now. But she's hurt *his boy.*

That's not something Freddy can forgive.

She is very lucky that he has to get to the nearest first-aid station. If Gregory wasn't so badly injured, her face would more resemble a heap of scrap metal than a wolf by now.

When she rises, shaking her head furiously to recalibrate, Freddy growls, feral and deep.

"Do not *dare* get any closer." He threatens, the red light continuing to blink.

"Freddy," Roxy hisses, leveling a glare at him, eyes searching his face. "Freddy, what are you *doing?"*

He doesn't answer her. He backs away, feet heavy against the tile.

He *has* to go. Gregory is shaking in his hutch, grasping his bleeding arm, a sob of pain wrenching out of his throat.

"Stay away from him," Freddy's voice is overloaded with static. "Just stay away, Roxanne."

"The *runt—"*

"Do *not!"*

“He’s not your cub!” Roxy stands up at an awkward angle, ears flicking as she regains her balance. “He’s a *stranger,* Freddy! Monty told me that you keep *protecting* him, and about what happened when he tried to get the brat away from you—”

“—he brought that encounter upon *himself,* Roxy,” Freddy snarls.

“And now look at him!” Roxy snarls back, clawed finger pointing at the bear’s hatch. “He’s stuck crawling around now, with *no legs,* because the kid *broke them off!* How can you defend that?!”

I cannot, Freddy shakes his head, *but I* have *to try to get her to listen to me.* “You three have been nothing but antagonistic to him! Of course he is going to try and make sure you stop trailing after him!”

“Is that all you have to say?” Roxy’s ears droop, shoulders squaring. “You’re just gonna let this *punk* boss you around? You have a say in this, you know!” She claws at the air. “Don’t think I haven’t noticed your sudden *upgrades,* Freddy! Where’d you get those claws, huh?”

“Roxanne—”

“—and that new voice!” Roxy steps forward, snapping her jaw. “Sounds pretty *familiar,* doesn’t it?”

"Is there no reasoning with *any* of you?!" Freddy roars, hand pressing flat against his stomach hatch, gaze fierce as his iris’ shifts to that

horrible crimson. "Do you just all expect me to stand by in my room, act completely oblivious to what you are doing, all while you chase after a *child?!"*

"Freddy, don't do this to me. To *us."* Roxy snarls, tail lashing furiously, air whistling through her nose as she prepares herself. “Just *give me the boy* and this’ll all be *over.”*

"I will *not* give in, and you *know that."* The bear spreads his legs, metal pieces clicking as he digs his heels in. *“Leave, Roxanne.* I *beg* of you. Turn around, and *leave."*

When she crouches down, her claws gleaming, Freddy knows that he has prevented absolutely nothing.

Roxy lunges. Freddy’s body twists in place, leaning to the side, arm outstretched.

She misjudges the distance, and flies past him. His paw finds her cheek, then her shoulder, then her throat.

OBJECTIVE: DEFEND GREGORY.

Protocol loading...

His fingers curl around it.

ENABLED.

IF THIS ANIMATRONIC IS EXHIBITING STRANGE BEHAVIOR, SUCH AS SELF MODULATION, ALTERING INTERNAL SOFTWARE, OR BECOMING VIOLENT TOWARDS GUESTS AND OTHER ANIMATRONICS, SEEK THE NEAREST STAFF PERSONNEL FOR HELP. ON BEHALF OF FAZBEAR ENTERTAINMENT, WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION.

Immediately, his arm is nearly wrenched out of his socket from the weight, Roxy reeling back in his grip as he holds her up, wires sparking under his shoulder pad.

The ends justify the means, at least for tonight, his system declares. *I have already risked being damaged before. I cannot test my luck any further!*

Roxy howls in outrage, in *fear,* Freddy can't tell, as her system catches up to her body, clawing at the casing of his forearm. He tightens his grip and raises her higher from the floor, locking the joint of his shoulder in place. She jostles it, and tries to kick out with her legs, aiming right at his stomach hatch—Freddy's free arm grabs her ankle before it hits him, cracking the plastic as he jolts it. The metal creaks before giving way, Roxy screeching in frustration as it splinters, going limp. She attempts to kick with her other leg, but it's too far away, the angle all wrong.

Freddy lets her ankle go, fingers spreading apart. The top of his claw unlatches from its place, the lighter clicking as a tiny, bright flame sparks at his fingertip.

"Why are you doing this?" Roxy croaks, shuddering in Freddy's hand as he chokes her. System alerts cloud his vision, the flame burning brightly, lashing against his palm. The yellow and red light clash against their metallic pieces, stark shadows twisting her features. "The *runt* is the intruder, not *me!"*

"You are hunting a *guest,* Roxanne." Freddy's motors hiss as he pulls her even higher, her throat still tight in his fist. He hears Gregory whimper at the sudden movement—he needs to get him patched up, and Roxy *is in the way*. "You seem to have forgotten that we are built to safeguard *each* and *every* child who comes into our establishment."

"Please," Roxy whimpers, her claws stilling against his arm, her tone dangerously close to a sob. "Please, Freddy, let me go. You're scaring me."

Freddy clenches his jaw, considering.

Roxy isn't innocent. She is as innocent as Chica and Monty are. He knows how desperate she is to prove herself, to anyone and everyone.

Freddy isn't innocent, either.

He knows that if he lets her go now, her insecurity will override whatever logic he tries to insist upon her.

Still. He must ask one question before he makes his decision.

"Do you promise to stay away from him?" His hand tightens, her endoskeleton's neck creaking under the pressure. She gags, grasping desperately at his paw, eyes shooting open. "Do you promise me, Roxanne?"

"I-I *can't."* Roxy whispers, eyes swimming in her head. "H-he's still an *intruder,* Freddy, and I *have* to be the one to *catch him—"*

"I am afraid, then," Freddy shifts his weight, Gregory shaking in his seat, "that I cannot afford to give you *any mercy."*

Please. Forgive me.

He puts his finger to her mane, and her artificial hair catches fire.

She shrieks in disbelief as it consumes her tail, her white and green curls, her largest point of pride burning off of her scalp. Before she can struggle any further, Freddy angles her body as far away as possible from him.

He spots Gregory's eyes peeking out from the edge of his casing between his neck and torso. He doesn't react openly, his pale face being the only indication of his fear.

"Why?!" Roxy screams. *"Why?!"*

Freddy refuses to answer her.

He lets go of her neck instead, curving into position, his foot crashing into her body. He's fighting fire with fire; he has been this entire time.

Her screams worsen as she skids on the tile, smoke trailing her in a haze, her arms flailing as she attempts to gain some sort of balance—

—and with a sickening crunch, she hits the ground, rolling until she's landed on her back, hair still alight. A cry rises from her jumbled ball of limbs, completely distraught.

“My hair! *You lit my hair on fire!”*

Battered, broken, and hair engulfed in flames, Roxy is a sorry sight. Freddy backs in the opposite direction, his finger latch shutting back over his lighter.

“I hate you. *I hate you!”* Roxy screams, her arms arching as she pulls herself up, forced to retreat. “You can’t keep the kid inside you forever! The *moment* he’s out, I’ll be there to tear him to *ribbons!”*

“You will *not* get that chance!” Freddy growls, tucking himself into the shadows of the exit, Roxy encased in a halo of bright light.

“And you *can’t guarantee that!”* She edges towards the salon, steps heavy, body heaving with the strain. “I’ll do it! I’ll make *sure* of it!”

She slips inside the entrance, the walkway darkening as the doors shut behind her. Freddy knows they only have a limited time to escape while she puts herself out.

He turns on his heel and runs.

“Freddy,” Gregory rasps, his injured hand clasping around the top of the hatch, “w-why did you— “

“—I had to get us away,” Freddy barrels through a pair of doors, searching for the nearest exit. His pupils start flickering again, now that the worst of the danger has passed. “Gregory, I had to. You are injured. She injured you.”

His boy swallows.

“She’s gonna be so mad now.”

We’re going to end up decommissioning her, anyway, Freddy’s systems hiss. *Just like the others. What other option do we have?*

“Whatever has infected them has led them down the wrong course of action,” The bear gruffs, ears tilting behind him as he risks a quick look at the cameras. Roxy is braced against a wall, tugging at her ruined hair with her claws, a sooty rag in her free hand. She’s surrounded by a haze of smoke, the ends still burning. “I have tried reasoning with each of them, and every time, I have failed. I am at a loss of what else can be done, except what I have promised you—getting you out of here, no matter what.”

“Even,” Gregory’s words waver, “even doing this? All of this?”

“Of course.” Freddy slows, pushing past the final gate, the music in the atrium flooding from down the last stretch of the hallway. “We are in this together, are we not?”

Gregory’s fingers brush against the plate. The red light returns back to its usual ivory.

“Yeah,” he says, “you’re right.”

A beat.

“I’m sorry, Freddy.”

“Do not apologize, superstar.” Freddy smiles, despite himself. His hatch opens as he approaches the first-aid station, gentle as he helps Gregory down. “We have been dealt bad cards; we are simply making the best out of a bad situation.”

"But this whole thing is all my fault!" Gregory rubs his face with his hands, flinching at the sudden bolt of pain from his bleeding arm. "I-if I hadn't came in, trying to find a place to stay for the night, the night guard wouldn't have—"

"—Gregory." Freddy lowers himself down, one hand opening the cover on the wall for the first-aid kit, the other rubbing a thumb over his boy's hand, coaxing it into his. "What are you talking about?"

The boy shivers, falling quiet. He licks his lips, debating for a moment on how to proceed.

"It's fine," he breathes. "I'm fine. We're gonna be okay."

"That is avoiding my question." Gregory's brow furrows in frustration, Freddy tilting his head. "Do you want to try that again?"

"No," the boy scowls. "Please, just—forget I said anything."

Prying too much is not a good idea, Freddy supposes, but the statement prickles at him. *'Trying to find a place to stay for the night?' And this far from the first time he has asked me to forget...*

"Alright," Freddy agrees, if only for the time being. "Let us put a pin in that. For now, I am afraid I must tend to your wounds yet again."

His boy nods, not fighting it this time, not like their first trip to a first-aid station. Freddy opens the kit, performing the same procedure. The sight of those three scratches pricks Freddy's circuits, wrapping gauze around them once they're cleaned.

"You got scratched, too," Gregory chides him, fumbling through the open kit. "Here—let me—"

"Gregory, I am not capable of damage in quite the same way you, as a human, are."

"I know!" His boy huffs. "Just—let me do this, okay? It'll make me feel better until we get back to Parts and Service."

He sticks a band-aid over the worst of the scratches. Freddy can't stop his grin widening.

"Thank you, Gregory." His boy squirms, shutting the kit. "I feel much better now. You have done an excellent job patching me up."

"Don't mention it." Gregory grabs a towel, tapping on Freddy's stomach. "Can you help me clean? I got blood all over you, and I don't want to keep sitting in it."

"Of course." He opens it without complaint, doing his best to lean down so Gregory can have easier access. His boy itches to do something he deems useful, and Freddy acquiesces. "You are a good sport about this."

"The blood part, or everything else?"

"All of the above." Gregory snorts. "I am proud of you, Gregory. You have not given up, not once, and that is something deserving of praise."

His boy pauses, wiping away the last of the bloodstains.

"I don't think there's anything for you to be proud of." His voice is small. "I've been putting you in danger the entire time. You could have gotten broken, *again,* and you still might end up that way!"

"It is not a guarantee that I will manage to stay capable of movement the entire time, that is true," Freddy admits, recalling the Daycare Attendant's meddling. That had been the beginning of his descent, he supposes, down this slippery slope. "However, that does not mean we are not doing our best to prevent it. Although I may still be upset with these upgrades," he brushes a paw over his throat, rubbing over it with unfamiliar green and purple coloring, "they have become a… necessary evil."

Gregory's mouth folds into a straight line, hand bracing against Freddy's leg. After a moment, he wraps his arms around it, hugging him as well as he is able.

Freddy's fans whirr as his face shifts, allowing himself just a moment

to hug his boy back.

It is not long after that Freddy watches Gregory's kart plow into Roxy, the wolf too incensed and damaged to jump out of the way. It is not that much longer when Gregory, shaking and covered in a thin coat of ash, crawls into Freddy's arms from a vent.

In his hand are the yellow pair of Roxy's eyes.

Freddy doesn't say a word about it as he pulls him up properly, hugging him to his chest, trudging from the maintenance tunnel to Parts and Service.

There is nothing to say.

Nothing except gentle, soft murmurings, soothing his boy, pressed to Freddy's front, Gregory's eyes searching down the stairway for danger.

End Notes

happy new year everybody! chekov's lighter, yeah? a bit more violent than dancing, perhaps. last part is (hopefully) gonna be out within the next few days, and thanks for sticking around. if you saw this posted before it's because ao3 couldn't handle it and decided to mess up its publishing date lol

EDIT: i see you guys in the comments, and thank you for the ideas, because i was honestly stuck the whole day after posting this trying to figure out how to handle the last bit haha. i also had to edit out like three sentences because i realized what i needed to do for the final section and, well, i can't very well have this series flow well if they have to return to a location, especially because freddy is the last animatronic of the batch and has a location themed after him -_- this is my first time doing this so sorry if it's a little... janky

EDIT 2: yes i'm still working on the last fic, it's almost there, i just need to add some extra stuff, and it's LONG, should be out by the end of the week. thank you all for your support + added some banners i did for each of these fics cause i'm also not an artist lol

EDIT 3: don't want people to get confused but the rest of the series is posted!

Please drop by the Archive and comment to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!